

FEBRUARY, 2009
ISSUE #18

HARVARD'S MASTER PLAN

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BAAM

Boston Anti-Authoritarian Movement
A General Anarchist Union in the Boston Area

Employee Free Choice Act Puts Corporations on the Offensive

by Jake B.

As workers shuffled into a room for their mandatory monthly meeting at Whole Foods Market in Brighton this month, they were surprised to be greeted by a regional manager. They were even more surprised when she began talking about unions.

"She said that unions aren't going to help with anything...that they are a business and they just take your money without option. She then threatened [the workers] by saying that [they] wouldn't get any more bonuses if in a union," said one employee who wished to remain anonymous. "Everyone around me was getting very irritated because they were talking down to us like children."

This scene is just one instance of the recent wave of anti-union furor from corporate America, which has been inflamed by the sheer possibility of the passing of the Em-

ployee Free Choice Act (EFCA), a bill that would make unionizing easier for American workers. The bill would reduce the risk of harassment for pro-union workers who are trying to unionize their workplace by creating a disclosed voting system and harsher penalties on supervisors, managers and owners who attempt to intimidate union organizers.

Under the current labor laws in the United States, instated by the National Labor Relations Act in 1935, the means by which workers vote on a union is chosen by the employer. The passage of the EFCA would give workers the choice of which method to use. Furthermore, the bill would entitle three-times back pay to workers who are fired for organizing and add up to \$20,000 fines against companies that "willfully or repeatedly violated employees' rights during an organizing campaign." Currently, there is no fine for compa-

nies that do so.

The bill passed the House in 2007, but failed to pass in the Senate by a few votes. Now, with a new congress and a new president who supports the bill, many view the bill as likely to pass in its next round. This has caused an uproar in the corporate world, whose leaders have been scrambling to block both the passage of the bill, through a multi-million dollar PR campaign, and to preemptively avoid the possibility of union organizing should the bill pass, bringing in "union specialists" to "warn" employees about the disadvantages of starting a union, as the employees of Whole Foods now know.

"Big Business has committed nearly \$200,000,000 to prevent the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act. They've even set up front groups, with names like The Coalition for a Democratic Workplace and Center for Union Facts, to attack candidates who support the bill and spread lies about what the act really does," said Arlene Holt Baker of the AFL-CIO.

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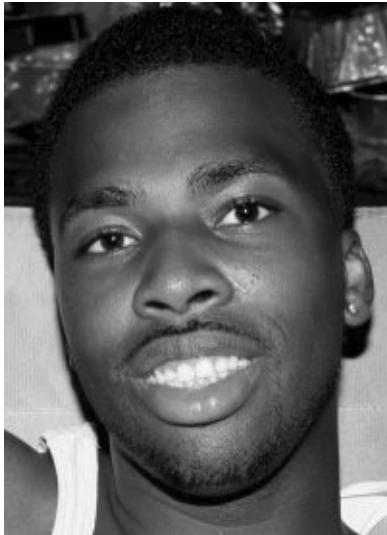
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Big Business' offensive has been directed both locally and nationally. On October 17, 2008, bailout recipient Bank of America hosted a conference call with heads of seventeen other major corporations, including a representative of AIG, another bailout recipient, to discuss strategy for making sure the bill does not pass. Participants in the call, which was leaked to the Huntington Post, were exceptionally brutal in their framing of the bill, and shockingly explicit in their plan to funnel millions of dollars to the 2008 election campaigns of potentially sympathetic politicians in order to sway their vote on the EFCA. Bernie Marcus, co-founder of Home Depot and mastermind behind the front group, Center for Union Facts, called the possibility of the EFCA passing "the demise of a civilization."

Justice for Jason

by Adrienne

In the early hours of February 3, 2008, twenty-two-year-old UMass Amherst student Jason Vassell was conversing with two friends in his dorm room, as university students often do. Trouble arose, however, because Jason Vassell is Black, his two friends white women, and standing outside his first floor window were two drunken white men, non-students with long records of racially motivated thuggery. The men started by yelling at Vassell, using such terms as 'bitch,' 'nigger,' 'pussy,' and 'retard.' While his friends went to call the police, the two men broke Vassell's window. Gaining access to the dormitory, they attacked Vassell, breaking his nose and giving him a concussion. Vassell defended himself from this unprovoked attack with a pocketknife, injuring his attackers, Jonathan Bosse and Jonathan Bowes. When the police finally arrived, they arrested Vassell, who had no priors whatsoever, referring to the student as a 'drug dealer' for no contextually clear reason, as well as an 'asshole' whose testimony was 'bullshit.' The district attorney charged him with two counts of aggravated assault and battery, charges that carry up to thirty years. Only one of his assailants, Jonathan Bowes, was arrested. The



Corporate America's stance on the EFCA can be summed up in the words of Marcus, who said "If a retailer has not gotten involved in this, if he has not spent money on this election, if he has not sent money to [former Sen.] Norm Coleman and all these other guys, they should be shot. They should be thrown out their goddamn jobs."

Convincing politicians is one thing, but convincing workers is proving to be a harder game. "In general, I think, if anything, that her speech made people interested in unions," said an employee of Whole Foods, "so come to Whole Foods Brighton and give out the cards to the employees."

Unfortunately, it's not that easy, but with the passage of the EFCA, employees will be one step closer to organizing without fear of repercussions.

only charge he received from the DA was a misdemeanor civil rights violation, carrying 18 months max. Held on unreasonably high bail for five days and denied the meds that had been prescribed for his injuries, Vassell was subjected to many an indignity at the hands of law enforcement before his family finally managed to get him out of custody. Despite Vassell's stellar academic record, he was forced to withdraw from the University.

Institutionalized white supremacy guarantees that atrocious crimes are committed against people of color every day, both by individuals and through institutions. Vassell's case is exceptional only in that his friends, fellow students and enraged community members immediately organized a campaign in his defense. Through rallies, call-ins, editorials and general mobilizing in Western Mass, Justice for Jason has drawn so much attention to Vassell's case that the obstinate DA has arranged for Vassell's court dates to take place half an hour away in Northampton, fearing that a jury in Amherst would not be 'impartial.'

Vassell's lawyers filed a motion to dismiss the preposterous charges against the young man, but at the court date on February 18th, complicated, uninteresting legal barriers arose that must be overcome before the motion can be considered. An evidentiary discovery hearing was scheduled for March 2nd. Till then, check out www.justiceforjason.org and feel free to call the DA's office and demand that they drop all charges against Jason Vassell. 413.586.9225

The BAAM Newsletter

is the monthly publication of the Boston Anti-Authoritarian Movement, a general union of Boston anarchists. Our publication aims to spread anti-authoritarian ideas and practices, and to report on the social struggles of workers, tenants, students, radicals, and others resisting the repression of the state, bosses, landlords and banks.

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World's Richest University Drives Neighbors Into Poverty

by Jake Carman

On Wednesday, February 18, Harvard University President Drew Faust announced plans to slow down the construction of a new campus in Lower Allston due to a 30% or 8 billion dollar loss in the University's endowment. This construction includes the 500,000-square-foot, four-building Harvard Science Complex, currently referred to by residents as "that massive hole in the ground" on Western Ave. As Faust wrote in public letters Wednesday, "From now until the end of the calendar year, we will complete the science complex's foundation and bring the structure to ground level—a requirement under any scenario." In practical terms, however, it should not take 10 months to pour the concrete foundation into an existing hole, but according to Faust, it won't be until 2010 when the university will determine "whether reduced expense or improved economic conditions will enable us to proceed with above-ground construction on an adjusted pace."

After years of broken promises, Faust's announcement comes as no surprise to the neighborhood's residents. For the past decade, Harvard has used fake real-estate companies to buy up huge tracks of land in Lower Allston and North Brighton, in preparation for the 50-year Institutional Master Plan that they filed January 11, 2007. Residents at the section 8 housing complex, the Charlesview, located across Western Ave. from the Science Complex, have had their homes bought out from under them by Harvard, whose public meetings are all in English. Many Charlesview residents speak only Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese or other languages. Harvard promised them a new home to replace the poorly maintained complex, but they have received mixed information about when. As one Charlesview tenant, Jimmy, said, "we as residents get two different messages... the Community Builders (TBC), the developers of the New Charlesview (say) 'we will brake ground in the fall of 2009.'" However, Jimmy continues, "Charlesview Management states we won't move until five years from now, so who do you believe?"

Residents are currently staving off a neighborhood-wide infestation of rats that many claim occurred after the Science Complex hole was dug a year ago. Harvard has set traps at the construction sight, at the Charlesview, and on surrounding streets, boasting that their site is rat-free; a claim backed by many residents in the surrounding area. Others, especially a half-mile away

in North Brighton, note a major increase in the rodents. Members of the Task Force and Harvard spokespeople have said that no rats came from the Science Complex hole, blaming residents for improper trash procedures; but rats live under the city's surface, and they are often displaced by major underground construction. These rats have settled down in the neighborhood where flimsy plastic trashcans provide an easy food source.

Furthermore, most of Harvard's properties in the neighborhood remain vacant, which doesn't help the rat problem, including a former K-Mart, a veterinarian's office, a bank, a dry-cleaners, a Frugal Fannies, a gas station, and a gigantic building on Lincoln St. that Harvard built but never used. Most of these vacant lots are not even included in their 50-year plan and are severely harmful to the local economy. The remaining small businesses are being strangled by the blight. As longtime Brighton resident and owner of Harry's Auto, Harry Nesdekidis said at the Allston Task Force meeting Monday that, Harvard "turned this place into a ghost town."

Residents see the Science Complex as another of Harvard's vacant properties and wasted spaces: a massive hole that will be, at best, surrounded in concrete by the end of the year, and probably left for the foreseeable future. "I am looking at a blighted neighborhood day after day," said Jimmy, "and a big

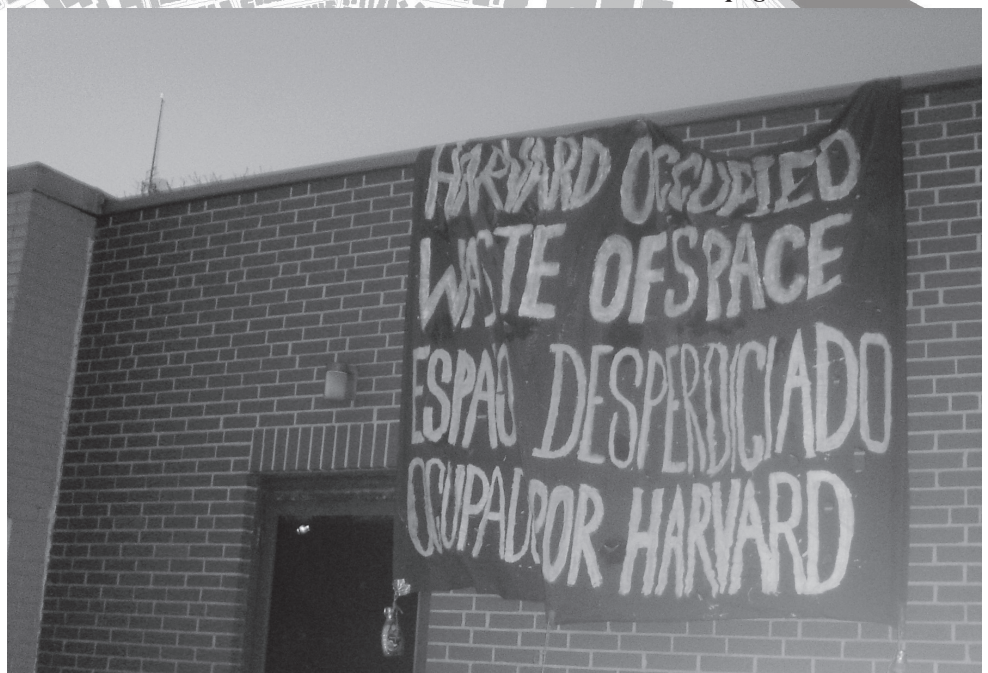
gigantic hole that sits about 100 feet from my apartment."

Members of the city-appointed Harvard-Allston Task Force, which advises the Boston Redevelopment Authority, disagree on Harvard's level of responsibility throughout the process. "So far they've been making good on most of their commitments to the community," Task Force Chairman Ray Mellone told the Allston/Brighton Tab. Another outspoken Task Force member, Harry Mattison, disagrees, saying Harvard hasn't been keeping their commitments. "If Faust says they're going to do a better job this year," Mattison said, "I'll look forward to seeing that. But the proof will be in the pudding."

It isn't just the neighbors who are suffering from Harvard's hardships, but the University's workers and students as well. As Geoff Carens, union representative, for 4800-member Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers (HUCTW/AFSCME) local 3650, said, "Harvard wants the workers to foot the bill." According to a WCVB Boston report, "Harvard already has cut 50 jobs at the endowment fund, enacted a salary freeze and offered early retirement packages to 1,600 eligible employees."

Harvard's work force is feeling the squeeze, and many have lost their jobs. "Clerical workers get laid off every month," said Carens. "Managers are being asked to present budgets with 10-15% reductions in costs... and 30-40% of janitors in some workplaces," are facing termination. Students too, will help pay for their school's mess. Harvard has an-

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Before and during the Harvard Task Force Meeting on Monday the 23, members of the the Allston/Brighton Neighborhood Assembly dropped several banners on vacant properties that the school is currently sitting on. Photo by ABNA.

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nounced a 3.5% hike in tuition, bringing it to \$33,696, plus raises in room and board, and other fees for students next year. Meanwhile, Harvard spokespeople would not discuss the salaries of top Harvard executives

We know whose being affected by Harvard's money problems, but where does the blame actually lie? According to Carens, in the last decade, "Harvard's top money managers moved the university's billions... into extremely risky and exotic areas such as hedge funds, private equity, oil in tanks, timber." As the economy declined, so did Harvard's endowment. "It was completely predictable that in a downturn, such speculative investments would tank," said Carens.

Harvard's endowment, however, is still \$28.7 billion, which is no pocket change. They remain a successful moneymaking institution protected from taxes by a questionable non-profit status. According to Carens, Harvard, which is still the wealthiest university on earth, gains "income from rent, research grants, fees, tuition, and gifts (not all gifts go to the endowment)." Carens also pointed out that, "Until very recently Harvard wasn't even spending 5% of its endowment per year, which most non-profits are required to do by law."

Meanwhile, the University continues to purchase more land in Lower Allston and North Brighton, such as the Brookline Machine Shop in North Brighton, which they bought earlier this month, further delegitimizing any claims of poverty.

Allston/Brighton residents, Harvard's students and workers are beginning to fight back. On Monday night, February 23, 2009, neighbors packed the auditorium of the Homan-Allston Library, to listen to chief operating officer of the Allston Development Group, Christopher Gordon, and Harvard's other mouthpieces attempting to defend their claim of being broke. Even though Gordon claimed Harvard's relationship with the neighborhood was "positive," according to Tracy Jan of the Boston Globe, "The largely hostile crowd accused Harvard of sucking the life out of a neighborhood...and implored the school to impose a moratorium on buying property until it completes a state-of-the-art science complex originally slated to open in 2011." Residents stood up one at a time to ask Harvard the tough questions, or simple state their outrage. Tom Lally, a long-time resident, chided Harvard on their deception, saying, "You got the money. You know you have it. For heaven's sake just do it!" Another resident and member of the Allston/Brighton Neighborhood Assembly, Molly Adelstein, compared the situation to a bad relationship:

"Our relationship with Harvard is an abusive one. Harvard has shown that it can slap us around." Adelstein also said that the neighborhood should "break up" with the University, and demand reparations.

At 5:30pm, one hour prior to the meeting, members of the Allston/Brighton Neighborhood Assembly hung banners on three of Harvard's vacant properties along Western Ave—the Charlesbank Cleaners, the old Citgo station, and off the gates of the Science Complex construction site itself. The banners read: "Harvard occupied waste of space," "Why am I Vacant? Ask Harvard: 617 469 6688," and a "28.7 Billion is not broke. Finish what you started."

ABNA members were also out in full strength at the Task Force meeting, contributing to the lively discussion and debate. At the end of the meeting, some activists left a

banner that read, "It's Time For Resistance," on the fence facing the library. ABNA members hoped that residents leaving the meeting might be inspired to think up and execute their own creative actions to show Harvard and the City of Boston that the people will defend their neighborhood.

Harvard workers are also stepping up the struggle. According to Geoff Carens, HUAC will commensate "militant, worker-led protests" on March 5, with "a major action," 12:30-1:30 p.m., at the Holyoke Center, next to the Au Bon Pain in Harvard Square. The Student Labor Action Movement (SLAM) has pledged to turn out to the action, and other groups of workers on campus who may hold similar events that day. Carens promises a campaign of "bad PR for Harvard, until they back off and treat workers fairly. We are determined to oppose any attacks on workers."

Breaking Up With Bank of America

by Alysha

On February 14, Valentine's Day, community members in over a dozen locations nationwide broke up with Bank of America in a national day of action called for by Rising Tide Boston and City Life/Vida Urbana. Encouraging Bank of America account holders to withdraw their funds and close their accounts with the institution, the action in Boston included street theater performances, as well as a support rally, which featured musicians. While Bank of America professes to "make every good loan they can," "support renewable energy," and "revitalize communities," the bank's infidelities include, but are not limited to, funding the war machine, devastating ecosystems and communities, displacing Indigenous peoples, and funding climate change.

Bank of America used \$4.1 Billion of its bailout money to acquire Countrywide Financial, making them the largest holder of mortgages in the US. They charge higher mortgage

loan rates to Latin@s and African Americans. Thus far, Bank of America has refused to follow in the footsteps of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae by halting all evictions of tenants after foreclosure. While claiming to invest in "renewable energy," BoA has given enormous loans to Peabody Energy, the world's largest coal company, infamous for its human rights abuses against Native Americans (14,000

people from the Dine' and Hopi tribes have been displaced from their ancestral lands to make way for the largest strip mine in the US). They've invested billions in Arch Coal, the nation's second largest coal producer, and sponsored a Harvard "environmental speaker series," which included a lecture by Arch Coal CEO Steve Leer about "clean coal" technology (which was successfully disrupted by Rising Tide Boston). Bank of America has partnered with the Harvard University Center for the Environment, which includes a \$1 million grant from BoA and "will support the development of a Carbon Capture and Storage Action Plan." They seem to be ignorant of the fact

that there is already an effective, sustainable system of carbon storage: in the ground.

There really seems to be no end to Bank of America's numerous human rights abuses, or to their string of lies and smokescreens. Bank of America, we won't stop until you do.

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Drama unfolded in Copley Square, as street performers dramatized the "break-up" in talk-show format. *Rising Tide.*

Reading the Fine Print in Obama's First Month

by Sublett

On January 23, after less than four days in office, newly elected President Barack Obama committed his first war crime. At his direct order, Predator drones fired missiles at two locations in Pakistan, killing 18 people. The number of injuries was not reported. The excuse given was that the residents were "militants," that is, they had the nerve to resist the genocidal imperialism perpetrated by the US and its allies. A few days later, on February 1, it was reported that the Obama administration was abandoning the war on terror. The slogan, that is, not the actual war. Alternative phrases reportedly under consideration are "ongoing struggle" and "enduring struggle against terrorism and extremism," according to the Associated Press. The families of those killed in Obama's missile attack will no doubt be comforted by the distinction.

This was not an isolated incident. In the weeks since Obama took office, a clear pattern of hypocrisy and disingenuousness has emerged in his administration's policies and actions. Examples abound, but this article will focus on the executive order "closing" the Guantanamo Bay military prison, and the halting of tribunals of those held there.

The prison, located at the Guantanamo Bay military base in Cuba, was established by the Bush administration to hold "enemy combatants" captured in the invasion of Afghanistan. They were so designated to avoid granting them prisoner of war status, so that they would not, according to the Justice Department, be entitled to protection under the Geneva Convention. The prison's location outside US territory gave the administration an excuse to claim that the Constitution does not apply there either. Many of the men imprisoned there were abducted by the military's Northern Alliance allies in return for a bounty, regardless of affiliation or combat status. Others were snatched up in Europe and elsewhere on little more basis than Middle Eastern ancestry and rumors of involve-

ment in terrorism. They will be referred to as "hostages" hereafter.

The "closing" of Guantanamo was announced on January 22 and hailed with enormous fanfare by deluded liberals nationwide. But even a cursory glance at the fine print shows that very little has actually changed. The order specifies only that the prison be closed within a year, and Obama is of course free to extend even that generous deadline. Since the tribunals have been discontinued, there is not even a pro forma process in place that could lead to the release of any hostages.



The administration has offered several excuses for the delay. None are convincing. Republican senators have been quoted as saying that the hostages are too dangerous to keep within US borders. This is obvious political posturing by a party desperate to divert public attention from their own disastrous performance over the last eight years. In any case, individual senators and congressional representatives have no authority over who gets sent to federal prisons in their districts.

The claim has also been made that more time is needed to review each case. This is patently ridiculous. After over half a decade in custody, all available information about each prisoner has certainly been collected and analyzed. The suggestion at this stage that not enough is known to make decisions about whom to release is an obvious delaying tactic. The only valid objection to immediate release

is that many hostages might be arrested and tortured again if returned to their home countries. However, this could be prevented easily by sending them to neutral countries. Albania, for example, has already accepted several Uighur hostages (from the Bush administration, no less) who could not be returned to China. They could very probably be persuaded to take more if enough money was offered.

So why not just move the hostages to the mainland all at once and try them in federal court? Probably because they were arrested with no warrants and no probable cause, and have been held without trial for as much as seven years while being tortured. Guantanamo's status as the "legal equivalent of outer space" meant that anything could be done to the hostages with complete impunity, and was. Torture, beatings and abuse, including waterboarding and worse, were everyday occurrences, according to international observers, former guards, and the handful of hostages released to Western countries. Their stories were almost completely ignored by the corporate media.

Since Obama took office, the situation has only gotten worse. Binyam Mohamed, a British hostage, has reported through his lawyer, Lt. Colonel Yvonne Bradley, that 50 hostages are on hunger strike. They are forcibly extracted from their cells twice a day and strapped into chairs to have feeding tubes shoved down their throats. They are beaten if they resist. Bradley is quoted in the Guardian saying "The JTF [the Joint Task Force running Guantanamo] are not commenting because they do not want the public to know what is going on."

All this explains why civilian trials are not considered an option by the administration. The hostage's guarantees to a speedy trial, against cruel and unusual punishment, against self-incrimination, and more have all been violated repeatedly. Given even rudimentary constitutional protections, it would be impossible to convict them. And as William J. Haynes, the Pentagon general counsel, once put it, "We can't have acquittals." It's hard to avoid the conclusion that the only purpose of Obama's executive order was to extend his honeymoon with liberals, and that the kidnapping victims imprisoned at Guantanamo will be released, if at all, in the same slow trickle as during the last years of the Bush regime.



PALESTINE

The No-State Solution

by James Herod

James Herod is an anarchist author and speaker. His book *Getting Free: Creating an Association of Democratic Autonomous Neighborhoods*, first published in 1998, is a strategic guide recommending new strategies to create autonomous anti-capitalist communities through democratic assemblies.

It is available at www.jamesherod.info, or in hard copy at The Lucy Parsons Center, a collectively-run radical book store and community center at 549 Columbus Ave in the South End.

Neither the two-state nor the one-state solution will solve the problem in Palestine. Only the no-state solution will.(1) The no-state solution calls for dismantling the Israeli state and abandoning any attempt to establish a Palestinian state. Rather, the peoples living in the territory of historical Palestine will progress to the advanced decentralized social form of an association of autonomous self-governing communities based on direct democracy. Representative government will be abolished. This historic leap forward should also immediately encompass both Lebanon and Jordan, two artificial states created by Western imperialists upon the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.

The no-state solution would allow the inhabitants of Palestine to progress beyond territorial units governed by capitalist ruling classes, regardless of whether these classes defined themselves in ethnic, racial, or religious terms, or by the so-called civil rights of secular humanistic liberalism. The real problem is the nation-state itself, and not whether it is religious or secular, ethnically (or racially) homogenous or not, mono or multi cultural, liberal or conservative.

This beautiful anarchist proposal—an obvious solution—has unfortunately not even been on the agenda throughout the entire one-hundred year long attack by Zionists upon Palestinians. Why? For one thing, the his-

torical victory of marxism over anarchism in the nineteenth century meant that anarchists have been marginalized and kept out of the political arena for more than a hundred years. For another thing, the capitalist-controlled nation-state system is so strong and entrenched that it is hard to think outside that framework, and hardly anyone has. Now, however, a few innovative voices are being heard in favor of the idea, for example, those of Bill Templer(2) or Uri Gordon.(3)

The trouble with the two-state solution is that it grants legitimacy to the Zionist state of Israel, and thus recognizes its right to exist. But Israel has no right to exist whatsoever. It was founded on the violent expulsion of the native inhabitants (and rightful owners) of Palestine (approximately 750,000 of them). The Zionists' terrorist campaign of ethnic cleansing, stretching now for nearly a century, has been possible only because Western imperialist powers, especially the United States, have supported it, with massive amounts of military, financial, and political aid. To right this egregious historical injustice, it is necessary to dismantle the militarist and racist state of Israel and establish the right of return for Palestinian refugees, who now number nearly five million persons.

And this has always been the intention of Palestine liberation movements, although not always of their leaders, or of certain Western intellectuals. As for the leaders, both the Palestine Liberation Organization and Hamas eventually came to accept the two-state solution. As for intellectuals, Noam Chomsky has always (and as recently as last month) en-

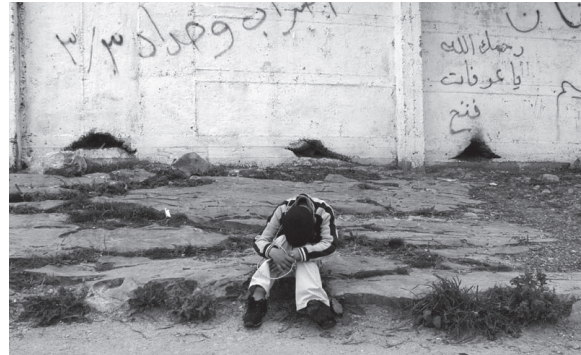
dorsed the two-state solution. (How is it, by the way, that Chomsky, who purports to be an anarchist, never proposes an anarchist solution to any issue of current import?) So why haven't two states been established? Because

Zionist Israel doesn't want a Palestinian state. Its goal from the beginning has always been to steal all the land of Palestine—and even more land from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt—for a Greater Israel, and to cleanse the land of all non-Jewish inhabitants.

Furthermore, the Zionist theft of Palestinian land has proceeded unabated to such an extent that there is by now hardly any land left upon which to base a Palestinian state. Palestinians have been corralled and imprisoned in Gaza and in numerous tiny Bantustan-like isolated enclaves in the West Bank. They control nothing. Israel has effectively taken the two-state solution off the agenda.

Moreover, after Israel's ghastly and horrific massacres, bombings, and invasions in recent years of Jenin, Lebanon, and now Gaza, and after decades of its brutal assaults on Palestinians with targeted assassinations of their leaders, house demolitions, blockades, the Wall, random murders, destruction of orchards and olive groves, the theft of water, economic strangulation, imprisonment without trial, torture, starvation, theft of moneys, restriction of travel, destruction of civil society, destruction of infrastructure, and so forth ad nauseam, who in their right mind could still contemplate Israel's continued existence in the Middle East? These crimes have been so beyond the pale as to totally destroy forever

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The Israeli Defense Force uprooted hundreds of olive trees near the city of Nilin. Palestinians protested the act along with Anarchists Against the Wall, an Israeli anarchist group. Members are currently touring the US, and came to Cambridge this past month. *Photo by Karen Manor/Activestills.org*

The trouble with the two-state solution is that it grants legitimacy to the Zionist state of Israel, and thus recognizes its right to exist.

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any claim some may have made for Israel's legitimacy, or any desire to live with the Israeli state in peace.

And so we come to the one-state solution, which is now being mentioned more frequently, and sometimes seriously argued for.⁽⁴⁾ Its proponents envision one secular state for historical Palestine in which the civil rights of all citizens would be guaranteed, and in which people from the various religions and ethnicities could live together in equality, freedom, and peace. Such a state would obviously mean the end of the Zionist project and so is vehemently rejected by Zionist Israelis.

In truth, the secular state should not be endorsed by anyone. Its supposed benefits are largely a mirage. There is hardly a nation-state anywhere that doesn't practice serious discrimination against internal racial or ethnic minorities, not to mention their seemingly ineradicable oppression of the female half of the human race, or their determined and universal exploitation of the working class. With rare exception, the nation-states of the world are controlled by capitalists. Those few which fall into socialist hands end up colluding with capitalists anyway. For decades, marxists have written detailed critiques of "bourgeois

democracy," as they called it, exposing it as a fraud. So have anarchists. Kropotkin published a blistering attack on representative government 124 years ago in 1885.⁽⁵⁾ It's as though he had written it last year just for us.



Israeli white phosphorus shells explode over the UN compound in Gaza during recent siege. Acts of war such as this continue to undermine hopes for a shared state, or peaceful separate states. Photo from UNRWA.

The era of representative government is coming to an end. It is imperative that we make sure that it does end.⁽⁶⁾

This is why it is so important to push for the no-state solution in Palestine. The fact that this seems presently impossible is all the more reason to try hard to get the idea into the air, to get the proposal onto the table. This is the first step. Only in this way will we begin to see how it might be brought about.

After all, a decentralized world, without capitalism or states, seems impossible everywhere. But it might not be. We have to start fighting for what we want, and for what is just, and not for what we think we can get. The social organization of the world must be changed in fundamental ways if we humans are to have any hope of surviving the unprecedented crises now facing us, and of creating a livable and sustainable society.

Notes

(1) William Bowles, "The Final Solution is a No-State Solution," on the web at: <http://www.creative-i.info/?p=4296>. This short article, which appeared on several web sites on the Internet on January 28-29, 2009, is not

about the anarchist idea of a no-state solution, as discussed in this essay, but about the Zionist ideological connection with Nazism, and to a doctrine which seeks

the eradication of "impure" persons from a population or territory. "No-state," as used by Bowles, means that Palestinians will get neither the two-state solution nor the one-state solution. They will get nothing, no state. They will be eliminated or expelled, and "Israel" will be ethnically cleansed.

(2) Bill Templer, "Reclaiming the Commons in Palestine/Israel: Ya Basta! / Khalas!" on the web at: <http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/templer230708p.html>.

(3) Uri Gordon, "Homeland: Anarchy and Joint Struggle in Palestine/Israel," Ch. 6 in his *Anarchy Alive!*

(4) Ali Abunimah, *One Country: A Bold Proposal to End the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse*; and Joel Kovel, *Overcoming Zionism: Creating a Single Democratic State in Israel/Palestine*

(5) Peter Kropotkin, "Representative Government," Ch. 13 in his *Words of a Rebel*

(6) A bibliography of literature discrediting representative government can be found online at: <http://www.neanarchist.net/antielect08/bib>, entitled "Resource List for the Anti-Elections / Pro-Anarchy Campaign"

Useful Books

Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine*
Edward Said, *The End of the Peace Process* (revised and updated edition, 2002)

Norman Finkelstein, *Image and Reality of the Israel Palestine Conflict*

James Petras, *The Power of Israel in the United States*

Useful Web Sites

Angry Arab News Service

The Web Site of As'ad Abukhalil

<http://www.angryarab.blogspot.com/ElectronicIntifada>

<http://electronicintifada.net/>

Uruknet.info

<http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6>

New England Committee to Defend Palestine

<http://www.onepalestine.org/>



Icelandic Insurrection

by Dave

In November, just before Greece started burning, the Icelandic economy was crashing. Since earlier in the winter, people's lives were changing due to the failing economy. The banks had been nationalized to try to solve the debt problem, but that move put the failing enterprises on the shoulders of the people, making those businesses their economic responsibility. Unemployed and underemployed citizens have a hard enough time feeding themselves without having to lift—not one—but three failing banks back up to economic prosperity. Some Icelanders chose to leave the country and immigrate to the Americas and other places in Europe, yet others stayed and fought back. The Anarchist presence in Iceland, like in Greece, was very strong and gained broader community support. They called for direct action to tear the system down.

With the citizens of Iceland losing 200 jobs a day and the IMF granting Iceland a loan, the people were determined to take action. The Anarchists were demanding that the governing regime step down. They were not aiming at revision or reform; their message, which they shared with their neighbors and coworkers, was that capitalist police states are futile. As part of a broader coalition, Anarchists mobilized against the government.

Anarchists organized direct actions for the weekly demonstrations against the parliament and banks. One Anarchist climbed to the top of parliament and hung a flag with a pig on it, saying, "The government is a Dirty Pig." After this person was jailed, 500 people showed up at the prison in order to demand his release. Actions were then taken against banks as well as the parliament.

Anarchists confronted parliament, building large bonfires in front of the building and blocking it from access. When the fires died down, the Anarchists found more fuel "Greek Style" by burning a giant Christmas tree donated by Norway. While the tree was burning, the Anarchists humiliated the police in front of the crowd by drawing attention to their occupational ineptitude. Protesters relentlessly confronted parliament each day until their demands were met.

The party in power did step down and re-elections were called. The Social Democratic Alliance candidate, Johanna Siguroardottir, was elected Prime Minister and took office on February 1, 2009, earning her the historical distinction of first openly gay head of state.

Some consider this a victory for queer and labor rights. Others believe she isn't going to do anything more for the queer movement than any other liberal in power. As far as her sympathy for the labor movement, how can someone in a seat of authority have any real sympathy or interest with the working people?

The insurrection itself and its tactics proved successful; the officials were forced out of office. However, the results were far from desirable. The election brought in another authoritarian figure, winning over the masses with her supposed sympathies toward labor. There is still hope for Iceland that, like Greece, the insurrection can become fired up again at any given moment. In short, Alexis lives not only in Greece, but in Iceland, too, where the state went too far and the people fought back.



Students Occupy NYU

by Bruce

At 10PM on Wednesday the 18th, students from the group Take Back NYU! occupied the Kimmel Center for University Life. Take Back NYU! is a coalition of over two dozen groups, both from NYU as well as New York in general.

In the beginning, 60 people used tables and chairs to barricade themselves within the room, declaring the room occupied. Excitement was in the air and a dance party ensued that night.

Take Back NYU! issued demands focused on giving amnesty to all parties involved in

the occupation, full compensation for employees whose jobs were disrupted, giving help and supplies to Gaza (including scholarships to Palestinians), having NYU make its annual budget and endowments public, creating a Socially Responsible Finance Committee, stabilizing tuition for its students, and generally giving students and students groups more power and say within the school.

As the occupation continued through to the next day, support grew rapidly. It wasn't long before the whole building was closed, but that didn't stop 30 people from storming the police line to join the occupation. That night, 200 supporters took to the streets outside accompanied by the Rude Mechanical Orchestra. At this point, the police began pepper-spraying people and hitting demonstrators with batons, initiating violence at what was otherwise a completely non-violent demonstration, both inside the building and on the street outside.

The final day of the occupation, Friday the 20th, is where NYU showed their true colors and exemplified the causes of the occupation. Early in the morning, NYU

Above: Iceland's masses in revolt
Below: Students Occupy the Kimmel Center at NYU. Photo by Daedalus42

shut off wireless internet access to the Kimmel Center. Reports emerged later in the day that electricity to the room was cut as well.

Eventually, the police broke through the barricade and the occupation slowly came to a close. NYU sus-

pended many of the students participating in the occupation, expelling five. Demonstrators who lived on campus were essentially evicted from on-campus housing and put in "temporary housing."

Negotiations never occurred between Take Back NYU! and NYU. Not only that, but when NYU agreed to "negotiate," the two students that were sent to talk to them were suspended and escorted off campus.

Despite all of the repression that occurred it, Take Back NYU! believes that "the occupation represents a historic moment, and [was] by many measures a success." They conclude their statement with a call to action to everywhere, "Onward."

The Foreclosure Crisis Just Got Weirder

by Adrienne

Earlier this month, while riding the red line, I cast a jaundiced eye upon the Metro, which eye then bugged at a tiny item in the sidebar. It is abundantly clear to any literate/conversant adult that we are living in some seriously crazy economic times, but I was not prepared to learn that the John Hancock Tower, the tallest skyscraper in New England, is facing foreclosure. Broadway Partners purchased the shiny, reflective 60-story tower in 2006 for \$1.3 billion, but has since defaulted on debt payments on this and other buildings. Its value now estimated at somewhere between \$700 and \$900 million, this defining piece of our skyline will be up for auction on March 31st. Asking \$100 rent per square foot for office space [no, that's not a typo], much of the building is already vacant. A down economy and white-collar layoffs mean that employers aren't as willing to shell out excessive rent on prestigious addresses, especially while their newly reduced work forces require less space. Prospective buyers on the 31st are sure to be few; in all probability, it's looking like the lenders to Broadway will take possession of the Hancock.

In the midst of a foreclosure crisis where families are getting evicted from their homes left and right, news that the iconic 60-story tower is going up for auction flooded my mind with disbelief, detached amusement at the woes of the wealthy, and sent my mind spinning with the sheer possibility. Here we have sixty stories of shiny space in Copley Square across from Charles McKim's 'palace for the people,' the nation's first public library, erected for the betterment of the populace. Imagine if the city could manifest this kind of civic-minded generosity again and open the tremendous guts of the Hancock to its citizens for affordable, cooperative housing units. The 2008 Boston Homeless Census found 6,901 homeless people in our city. These children, women and men have nowhere to live while every skyscraper and office building in town has vacant floors. Our residential areas are scarred by foreclosed, vacant homes. Anyone with a conscience should see that there's a fairly obvious solution to all this. Luckily for Boston's impoverished and homeless, our politicians are conscience-free, prizing property rights above human rights.

I think I liked it better when the Hancock was raining 500lb sheets of glass onto the streets below.

CALENDAR: GET INVOLVED

Every Monday:

Papercut Zine Library meeting, 7:30pm, 45 Mt. Auburn St., Cambridge

First Tuesday of Every Month:

BAAM meeting, 7pm, Lucy Parsons Center, 549 Columbus Ave, Boston

Second Tuesday of Every Month:

Anarchist Black Cross meeting (defense and prison abolition group), 8pm, 45 Mt. Auburn St., Cambridge

Every Wednesday: Free Radical

Film Nights, 7pm, at the Lucy Parsons Center, 549 Columbus Ave, Boston, Ma

First Sunday of Every Month: Rising

Tide Boston meeting, 5:30pm @ The Lucy Parsons Center 549 Columbus Ave, Boston

Second Sunday of Every Month: 2pm

Industrial Workers of the World meeting. Lucy Parsons Center, 549 Columbus Ave.

Third Sunday of Every Month:

BAAM work and activity day, 1pm. Locations being arranged, email Jake at trenchesfullofpoets@riseup.net for info.

Every Friday:

Food Not Bombs free community meal, 4-6pm, Boston Common, near the Park St T-Stop, Boston

March 5th

Readings from Rachel Corrie. 6:30-9pm. Portsmouth Public Library, 175 Parrott Ave., Portsmouth, NH. The Palestine Education Network presents a Palestine teach-in, in the Levenson Room of the Portsmouth Public Library with Readings from Rachel Corrie, moving and informative journal excerpts of a young American woman killed in Gaza by an Israeli bulldozer while she was protesting a house demolition. Info: (603)436-2424 / skyarne@yahoo.com

March 7th

Women, Healthcare and the Economy. 9am-1pm. Plumbers & Gasfitters Local 12, 1240 Massachusetts Ave., Boston, MA. Workshops: Working for Single Payer Health Care, Investing in Health Care as an Economic Stimulus, La Reforma de Seguro de Salud del Estado. Lunch will be served. Childcare available upon request.

March 7th

The Boston Workers' Alliance Open House: BWA invites you to visit our new office in Grove Hall. 12-3pm, BWA Office, 411 Blue Hill Ave., Dorchester, MA. Please join us in celebrating our growth, thanking our supporters and building our power for change. Stop by our Open House to meet the leaders of the BWA. Hear about our efforts to win jobs and CORI reform, and find out how you can support the movement. Families are welcome. Light lunch will be served.

March 8th

Prisoner Support Afternoon. 2pm @ the Arsenal Hall (Brighton). Join the Boston Anarchist Black Cross in writing letters and sending literature to prisoners. email Jake at trenchesfullofpoets@riseup.net for directions.

March 10th

Anarchist Black Cross monthly meeting. 8pm, 45 Mt. Auburn St., Cambridge. The ABC is a defense and prison abolition group that supports prisoners, holds know your rights and other legal and defense trainings, and maintains a community bail fund.



CALENDAR: GET INVOLVED

March 13

Confront Fred Phelps and 'god hates fags' at the Cambridge and Lexington highschools. These right-wing career-homophobes want to bring their messages of hate to our highschool children. Details at www.godhatesfags.com/schedule.html

March 21

The 6th anniversary of the Iraq invasion. Various actions will be held in Boston, Washington, DC and around the country.

April 11-12

Third annual New York City Anarchist Bookfair. A one-day exposition of books, zines, pamphlets, art, film/video and other cultural and political productions of the anarchist scene worldwide, at Judson Memorial Church in Manhattan. To contact the NYC Anarchist Book Fair Organizing Collective to volunteer, make a donation or get more information, e-mail us at info@anarchistbookfair.net. www.anarchistbookfair.net/

April 18

F.A.D.G.E. Fest! Noon - 11:00pm at the Charter Oak Cultural Center in Hartford, Conn. FADGE (or Feminism, Autonomy, Diversity and Gender Expression) is a female-positive day of workshops, art and music. This year's festival focuses on the female as a whole person, body and mind. Workshops will cover diverse topics such

as self-defense, art therapy, sexual violence and body image. There will be live music throughout the day as well as art vendors. This event is for all ages and genders. Your \$10 donation will benefit a local women's shelter. For more information please visit www.myspace.com/fadgefest or write [*ctctntfest@gmail.com*](mailto:ctctntfest@gmail.com)

April 18 and 19

The Boston Skillshare. at MIT's Stata Center (between Ames and Vassar Sts, Cambridge). The Boston Skillshare is an annual volunteer-run, donation-based weekend event that brings people together to share practical skills. It aims to create a temporary space for people to share practical skills, which help us to live happily, creatively and sustainably. The emphasis is on action over theory, participation over talk. We want to live with enthusiasm, so let us learn with vigor! Sliding scale donation and/or volunteer to help. <http://bostonkillshare.org>

April 25 and 26

IMF/World Bank Meeting, Washington D.C. Details TBA, but save the date.

May 1st

International Workers' Day. Celebrate workers' history. Go on strike, or call in sick, and we'll see you on the streets. Event details TBA. www.bostonmayday.org/

May 16 and 17

Montreal's 10th Annual Anarchist Bookfair at the CEDA, 2515 Delisle, a short walk from Lionel-Groulx metro). Part of the month-long Festival of Anarchy, throughout the month of May 2009 at venues and locations all over the island of Montreal. The Montreal Anarchist Bookfair – and month-long Festival of Anarchy – brings together anarchist ideas and practice, through words, images, music, theater and day-to-day struggles for justice, dignity and collective liberation. The bookfair is as much for people who don't necessarily consider themselves anarchists but are curious about anarchism, as it is a space for anarchists to meet, network and share in a spirit of respect and solidarity. All are welcome. The bookfair principles are linked here: <http://www.anarchistbookfair.ca/en/node/4>



HELP US SAVE TREES! (PAPER AND MONEY) FOR A FREE EMAIL SUBSCRIPTION, CONTACT JAKEATTRENCHESFULLOFPOETS@RISEUP.NET

Contributors to this month's issue:

-Adrienne
-Alysha
-Bruce
-Dave
-Jake B.
-Jake Carman
-James Herod
-Sublett



What is Anarchism?

Anarchism is the theory and practice of a human society organizing without hierarchy, authority and oppression. This means that all people have equal access to the decision-making process and to the products of their collective labor. Anarchy can be described as true, direct democracy. It is horizontal: i.e. workers working together without bosses, neighbors organizing housing and neighborhoods without landlords, and people making decisions without politicians. There are many different ideas on how to get there and what exactly it will look like. We can talk all we want, but only a truly free and revolutionary people will be able to decide what their revolution will look like. So comrades, let's get to work!

WWW.BAAMBOSTON.ORG